AN

ANSWER

TO

Vox Cleri, &c.

EXAMINING

The *REASONS* againſt making any *Alterations* and *Abatements*, In order to

A Compzehenſion.

AND

Shewing the EXPEDIENCY thereof.

PAYNE W

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THE Author of *Vox Cleri* writes as if he were Clerk or Secretary to the Convocation, and ſo delivered the ſenſe of that whole venerable Aſſembly; for why elſe does he give ſuch a Title to his Book, to amuſe the World, and bring a ſcandal upon the Clergy, as if they were generally of his mind: and yet he tells us *that nothing has been propoſed to them*: ſo that they have not yet declared their minds, nor had an opportunity to doe ſo: and, I think, he has done them a great deal of injury, firſt, to ſuppoſe, and then, tell all the World, that they are againſt Alterations and Abatements in ſome indifferent matters for the ſake of that Peace and Union which is the deſire, and ſhould be the endeavour, of every good man.

I ſhall be very unwilling to believe ſo ill of ſo many wiſe and worthy men, that they are againſt ſuch a Deſign, ſo much for the honour of God, the good of Religion in general, the Peace of the Kingdom, and the Intereſt of the Church of *England*.

I cannot think that any man in cool and ſober thoughts can be againſt it, unleſs he be tranſported with ſome fit of anger, or which is as outragious, of eloquence; and then ſuch a raſh ſaying as, *Nolumus mutare leges Angliæ*, may come out without reaſon, and ought to be forgiven among friends: but however the words chimed in a Speech to the Tune of *Chriſt-church-bells*, yet they were as ſenſeleſs and impertinent as this Authour's quotation out of *Solomon* on the Banner of his Book, *Meddle not with them that are given to change*; which would have ſerved the Quaker as well againſt changing his old cloaths as the deſign and buſineſs they are brought for: but if there had been no changes ſince *Solomon*'s time, nor ſince the Barons, in the Laws of *England*, we had been in a very primitive, but not quite ſo good a ſtate as at preſent.

But this Gentleman ſeems to be under ſome great fear as well as anger, *as if he were to be executed at the will of the rabble:* What he has done I cannot tell, but he ſeems for ſome reaſon or other to be afraid to go home; he complains, *he has not the privilege of other Malefactours, which all Law and Equity gives them of making a defence, eſpecially when their reputation, their livelyhoods, and even their lives are concerned*; ſo that he ſeems to be under ſome dread and terrour that has ſcared him, not out of his livelyhood or his life, I hope, but of ſomething elſe, I fear, that makes him write as he does; for he contradicts himſelf almoſt in the ſame line, and owns that ſeveral times in a good mood which he writes all along againſt.

He and the Clergy in his Neighbourhood are very inclinable, he ſays, *to part with ſeveral Ceremonies, and to ſubmit to many Alterations for the Peace of the Church and*

and Satisfaction of ſober Diſſenters (a). Yet he muſters up all the reaſons he can againſt this; and his whole Book is writ againſt it. (a) p. 1.

The end of the Commiſſion is, he ſays, *to take away all occaſions of difference for the future, as well as reconciling all their Majeſties ſubjects at preſent. A Bleſſing! this to be ſeriouſly endeavoured by all perſons, but rather to be hoped for than expected* (b). If to be ſeriouſly endeavoured by all perſons, why does he all he can againſt any ſuch endeavours? (b) p. 17.

In another place (c) *I do here proteſt that were it not that the Diſſenters have given us an Aſſurance that though theſe and many other alterations ſhould be made, it would give them no ſatisfaction, nor bring them into our Communion, I would uſe all the intereſt I have for ſuch Alterations; and for that end alſo part with many other Ceremonies.* I cannot believe the Diſſenters have given him any ſuch aſſurance, if they have, I hope he knows them better than to truſt them; but how is this reconcileable with what he ſo often harps upon? that, *if they did come in, it would make a worſe ſchiſm in the Church, and ſo be more miſchievous than that out of it.* (c) p. 26.

It cannot be a crime, ſays he very angrily, *not to doe that which is both againſt the Law of the Land and the dictates of their own Conſciences:* by the bye, I would fain know where that Law of the Land or thoſe dictates of Conſcience are to be found that forbid a Convocation to make Alterations?

But in the ſame line he goes on, and ſays, *It is not a crime for a man not to doe what none as yet hath required of him to doe?* how does he then know that 'tis both againſt the Law of the Land and the dictates of their own Conſciences?

Something therefore ſeems to have injured this

Gentleman's memory and reaſon, and his imagination ſeems to be diſturbed with fears of the Rabble, or ſomebody's having ſome ſtrange deſign upon him for being againſt Alterations; and therefore he draws in the dark at all adventures, and ſtands upon his guard, and throws about him, *it being a thing natural*, he tells us, *for a man to defend himſelf, there being no living creature ſo void of ſenſe as not to avoid another that attempts to deſtroy him, and every worm will turn upon him that will tread on it; and if an innocent perſon chance to injure another that injuriouſly aſſaults him, he is always held guiltleſs, as having done it* Se defendendo.

Why really I pity this Gentleman's caſe, if it be thus with him, for one would think he were in ſome great pain and peril, but we have reaſon to be angry with thoſe that have thus affrighted him, for otherwiſe we had had a better Book, or, which had been as well, none at all.

(a) p. 6. That terrible word *Latitudinarian* (a) has ſcared him I doubt, and 'tis almoſt as dreadfull as *Vercingentorix*; and ſome timorous old men can hardly ſpeak or hear it without trembling; they imagine ſome Monſter by it, of a mighty ſwallow and wide capacity, having both a Church and a Conventicle, if not a Pope in its belly, tearing and devouring the Ceremonies, mangling and altering the Liturgy, ſnarling and biting at Epiſcopacy, and *gaping for the Preferments which other men have ſignally deſerved, and are legally poſſeſſed of:* Now ſuch a creature as this may be in ſome void ſpace of a Map, or of an old Man's head, but no where elſe that I know of. But I ſuppoſe this new Sect or Hereſie are for making Alterations, and therefore our Authour is ſo angry with it, and reſolved to confute it; and ſince he and his Neighbours in the

the Countrey are so greatly pleased with Dr. *Jane's* being chosen Prolocutor (*b*) perhaps this may bring him to himself and put him into a good humour: and I dare say, this Doctor's worthy Competitour was so little concerned, that rather than spoil this, he would give it up, and let them have the comfort of believing the other chose by a great and even double Majority, however false that was, though it be put into the Acts of this learned Synod collected by our Authour, in order I suppose to be joined with the next Edition of the Councils, where may be some mistakes, and some actions too as great as in this, though scarce in any before, the Presbyters did so bravely hold their own, and stand it out against their Bishops; so that I reckon the point is already gained which he blames one of the Letters for requesting, *That Presbytery may be restored to its ancient privilege, and permitted to share in all Acts belonging to their station* (c). But I am afraid some of those *Latitudinarian* or *Smectymnuan* Presbyters *that are still among us, but are not of us* (d), have not so much respect and reverence for their Bishops as they ought to have.

(*b*) p. 1.

(*c*) p. 33.

(*d*) p. 34.

I forbear, says our Authour, *to call Names* (a), after he had used the most invidious ones he could think of; and I suppose we had had *Janites* and *Tillotsonians*, but that the one sounded very little and pitifully, and the other *would make up as terrible a word* almost as that of *Latitudinarians*; but to oblige him for ever, and to make him amends for all that is in this Paper, let the immortal name of *Longitudinarians* hereafter belong to them, for about twenty reasons more than can be given for the other; I mean to those who are for no Alterations or Abatements for the sake of Peace and Reconciliation.

(*a*) Ibid.

I own

I own this is a matter of Prudence, and the good or evil of it depends upon circumſtances, ſo that wiſe and good men may have different apprehenſions about it and may not be all of the ſame mind, but our Author's Reaſons do no way ſatisfie me that this is not fit to be done, nor does he anſwer, to my thinking, what others have offered for it.

I intend to argue the Point plainly and briefly with him, and then to prevent all Heretical pravity of a long name, *Omnia Eccleſiæ Judicio ſubmitto.*

Firſt then, Thoſe wiſe men out of the Weſt, his
p. 2. Neighbours in the Countrey, *think it very reaſonable that ſuch as are aggrieved ſhould make their application to the Convocation*; and do they think this will doe? why really yes, being in good humour themſelves, and the Convocation being ſo too, which is always to be ſuppoſed, our Author *doubts not that ſuch of the Diſſenters as will be ſatisfied with what in reaſon and conſcience may be granted, that they would be gratified, and a good agreement made, for all agree, according to our Subſcriptions, that ſuch Ceremonies as concern Diſcipline and Order, may upon juſt cauſes be altered and changed*; as good natured as can be! ſurely then 'tis but meer Complement whether the Diſſenters ſhould firſt ask or the Church give without asking; and to me now it looks better and more for the Churches honour and authority that That ſhould give terms to the Diſſenters rather than the Diſſenters give or propoſe terms to the Church. Our Author too is much of the ſame mind in this, and I believe I ſhall ſhew him that he is more of my mind in moſt things than he knows or thinks he is; for *Is it neceſſary*, ſays he in another place, *that a Church which hath authority to judge for it ſelf, what is decent and orderly, ſhould ſubject her ſelf to the judgment of her Mem-*

Members to determine for her or themſelves, what is de- p. 12.
cent and expedient and what is not: and a little before that, *Is it neceſſary that a Parent ſhould yield to a diſobedient Child upon his own unreaſonable terms?* No rather let the Parent wiſely and by fair means bring the ſtubborn Child off from its diſobedience if it be poſſible, without the Childs offering terms whether reaſonable or unreaſonable.

I believe our Author and his Countrey Neighbours would not have took it ſo well of the King, nor have been ſo quick and forward in addreſſing to him as ſome others were, had he called an Aſſembly of Diſſenters to treat with the Convocation and have propoſed terms to it; beſides, what if the Church be wiſer than the Diſſenters, and can better judge what Conceſſions are fit for them than they themſelves? It ſeems more proper for Governours to preſcribe to the governed than the contrary; the Preface to the Common Prayer ſays, *It is but reaſonable that on weighty and important conſiderations, according to the exigency of times and occaſions, ſuch Changes and Alterations may be made* as to thoſe that are in places of Authority *ſhould ſeem neceſſary or expedient.* This our Author quotes too on this head, but does not mind it as he ought. If he conſiders it a little better, he will plainly diſcern that the Church thinks it reaſonable to make Alterations ſometimes as ſhe thinks fit, whether the Diſſenters propoſe or agree in them or not, and 'tis well if the whole of this doe not ſeem to him a kind of Latitudinarian Principle crept into the Church, which ought to be altered, though nothing elſe.

But 2. *They think it reaſonable that the end ſhould be conſidered, before the means be reſolved on.* This is very ſage and grave, and becoming their Countrey wiſe-

dom,

dom, which does nothing in vain, never brews Ale without ſomebody to drink it, nor never ſets a Hen but to breed Chickens; according to that Logical Axiom which they ha'n't quite forgot, *Finis primum in Intellectu.* I ſuppoſe they mean here what they tell us in other places, *to what purpoſe will it be to make Alterations for the ſake of Diſſenters, when it will ſignifie nothing? Cui bono?* to take the ſtrength of it in a drachm of Latin; *to what end ſhould any Alterations be made,*
p. 5. *when they themſelves have ſo plainly declared that they will not be ſatisfied?* for they were not ſo by the 600 Alterations in 1661, nor by the Propoſals of D. *Stillingfleet:* and Mr. *Baxter*, and the *Healing Attempt* propoſe ſtrange things, ſo that *Is it neceſſary we ſhould part with any thing to them whom we have reaſon to ſuſpect that they will not leave craving till they have all?* And, *We think we have a moral aſſurance, that whatever Conceſſions the Convocation ſhall make with ſafety to themſelves will not only be deſpiſed but caſt back as filth in our faces, not only with a* Quis Requiſivit, *but with a* Pudet hæc opprobria vobis, *as if our manner of publick Worſhip were*
p. 2. *ſo corrupt that we were aſhamed of it, and were convinced of a neceſſity to purge it.* Here I have pickt up and gathered all the ſcattered Arguments on this Head, and twiſted them all together with the greateſt ſtrength, even with the ſhreds of *Latine* belonging to them which help mightily to bind 'em; but I muſt unlooſe them a little to give particular Anſwers to them.

Firſt then, I doubt not but ſome of the Diſſenters are as ſtiff and peeviſh as other ſort of men, and will be as hardly brought to come in upon Alterations as others are brought to make them; I am very ſenſible of the inflexible and indeed unchriſtian ſpirit that is in

many

many of the Fanaticks, but this I must say for them, they have not engrossed it wholly to themselves, nor are the onely men that are unwilling to be brought to Peace and Union upon any tolerable terms, or that refuse to have it upon any but their own. I doubt not, nay I have moral Assurance that a great many of the best and wisest Dissenters would come in upon some few Alterations, such as I think no wise and good Church-man would refuse to them, for that end, such as altering the Subscription, and the like Propositions made by that great man, the present Bishop of *Worcester*, whose wisedom and learning fits him to be universal Bishop of the Christian Church, if there were to be such an one, and would serve him instead of Infallibility; Had there been such an opportunity as there is now of confirming those Propositions of his by Convocation and Parliament, I question not but we should long before this have seen the happy effect of them; for though some angry men draw up Pleas for Non-conformity, as Lawyers draw up Bills of Pleading or Indictment, which they stuff out with a world of hideous and dreadfull things for forms sake and to please their Clyents; yet they mean not much by them in good earnest, and a few things which they demand and principally insist on would satisfie and content them.

There were private and particular Reasons which hindred the full effect of the Alterations in 61, but yet the number of those who conformed upon them exceeded I doubt not and was much greater than the Alterations themselves; and were the number never so little which were gained by this means, yet it renders those who stand out more inexcusable, and vindicates the Church without any detriment to it,

for it loſes nothing of what is ſubſtantial and neceſſary to its well-being, but onely ſome little things which are not worth keeping, when they keep out Peace and Union.

I am not for pulling down the Pillars of the Church to enlarge it, nor am I for letting in thoſe at one door who will drive out either Epiſcopacy or Liturgy at the other, without one of which there cannot, I think, be due Chriſtian government, nor due Chriſtian worſhip without the other. But I ſuppoſe we may take down an old Eſcutcheon, or ſweep down an old Cobweb or two, or ſet up a new Gallery, or whiten the
P. 35. old Walls, or the like, *without taking down beam after beam, and after a leſs ſtone a greater, till the whole Fabrick be like to fall:* and I believe the Church of *England* would ſtand as well though *Tobit* and all the *Apocrypha* were taken out of the Kalendar, and ſome Ceremonies out of the Rubrick, which do no more conduce to the ſupport or to the ornament of it, than thoſe odd figures which we ſee in ſome old buildings, that to unskilfull people look as if they bore a great weight, when nothing really lyes upon them, and which any man would take down, if they kept his good friends and neighbours from coming to his houſe.

I cannot ſee how theſe ſmall Alterations in things owned to be indifferent and alterable as the Church ſhall think meet, ſhould be made any reflexion upon it, as our Authour fears, *that they will be caſt back as filth in our faces, as if our manner of publick worſhip were ſo corrupt that we were aſhamed of it, and were convinced of a neceſſity to purge it.* I do not remember that any of the Diſſenters who have writ againſt the Church ſince 61. though they have raked up all the ob-

objections that zeal and anger could minister or invent, did ever make use of this, or throw those 600 Alterations which were then made in its teeth; if they had, it had shewn onely greater perverseness and unjustifiable wrangling after they were gone, though they did not at all corrupt our worship whilst they remained, nor make it at all unlawfull; but an obsolete word may be changed for one in use, and an expression altered for the better in a Prayer, and a translation mended that is not so exact in many places, and an 100 such alterations made, and yet no condemning our selves *for any corruptions that we were ashamed of, and were convinced of a necessity to purge out.*

Besides, these Concessions which we make for Peace sake are not so much from the necessity of the things themselves, as from the weakness and ignorances, the prejudices and mistakes of others, and the Church uses her Authority as all wise Governours doe, and as God himself did in compliance to the temper and infirmities of those who are subject to it, and with regard to the greater ends of Religion and Piety, Peace and Charity, which she prefers to Sacrifice or any the Externals of Religion.

But the Dissenters will not leave craving till they have all; Give an Inch and they'll take an Ell. Well fare an old Proverb, but that which spoiles it in this case is, that 'tis older than 61. or than any Alterations of our Liturgy then or before, or perhaps than the Reformation it self, and it was as true all along, and served as well against all that desired any Alterations before or since, and yet 'tis hard to get this, and *Solomon's, Meddle not with those that are given to change,* out of some mens heads who have no great Latitude or Profundity. p. 51.

If the Church makes a conceſſion to ſome perſons to have their Children baptized without the ſign of the Croſs, muſt ſhe therefore yield alſo to *Anabaptiſm* and to their humour who will not have Children baptized at all? If ſhe ſhould allow ſome to take the Communion without Kneeling, muſt ſhe yield to the Quakers who are for no Communion nor no poſitive Ordinances at all? If ſhe think not fit to pronounce the dreadful Sentence of Excommunication for ſmall matters, muſt ſhe yield to the *Eraſtians*, who would take it quite away? This is like the fear of the Lunatick, that if he let the Barber cut off his Beard, he would cut off his Head too, and therefore was always againſt ſuch a dangerous Reformation of his Face.

I am not of that witty Diſſenter's mind who was for taking away all the Ceremonies, with a fine ſimilitude, Religion is in a Conſumption, and therefore you muſt cut off its Hair; I doe not think that is the way to recover it, nor yet to give it *Aſſes* Milk, though that might agree better with ſome Conſtitutions than more ſubſtantial food and better Inſtructions.

Let the Diſſenters crave as long as they will, I hope the Church can deny as ſtifly as they crave unreaſonably. And I am perfectly of our Author's mind, though he had not Dr. *Beveridge*'s Authority for it, *That to alter the Epiſcopal Government, to take the Power of Ordination from Biſhops and place it in the hands of Prsbyters, to take away a well ordered Liturgy and bring in extemporary Prayers for publick worſhip, to give every Miniſter a Jurisdiction and Power of Excommunication, and many other things; without which ſome* grave *Diſſenters will not be comprehended; is more than the Learned Doctor, or any Doctor in* England, *will grant,*

grant, or desire to be granted to them. But surely our *grave* Author knows that the best and wisest, if not the *gravest* Dissenters, who are for a National Church, whose Interest is most considerable, and whose Credit has done the most to keep up Non-conformity, that these will be comprehended with something less than what he speaks of; and I doe not doubt but the bringing in of those into the Communion of the Church would tend greatly to strengthen its Interest and the Interest of the whole Protestant Religion, and to break that lamentable Schism and Separation which weakens both, and gives our Popish Adversaries the greatest Advantage against us, and which I hope they and we are both weary of.

If there are some Dissenters so wild that they can never be folded, nor brought into any settled Flock or Communion, though I would not have them hunted and run down like wild Beasts, and therefore I am not altogether so much against the Toleration as our Author is, yet I think it would have done more good, had the Comprehension took place before it, that so the Church might have gathered first, before the Separation, and not have been left to *glean* after *that* has made its full harvest.

But our Author, I perceive, is as much afraid at one time that the Dissenters should come in as he is at another that they would not; *And what*, says he, *if some leading Presbyterians be by our Alterations let into the Church, and advanced to such Preferments as they hope for; what security have we that they will not promote Divisions in the Church, more dangerous than the Schism they made by Separation from us? A secret Enemy within the walls of a well fortified City is more dangerous than an open Foe in the Field.* p. 10.

How

How then is this conſiſtent not onely with our Author's Opinion but moſt ſerious Proteſtation in another
p. 26. place, *I do here proteſt that, were it not that the Diſſenters have given us an Aſſurance that though theſe and many other Alterations ſhould be made, it would give them no ſatisfaction, nor bring them into our Communion, I would uſe all the Intereſt I have for ſuch Alterations; and for that end alſo part with many of the Ceremonies.* I ſhould think there were a contradiction in theſe two places, and that they would fall out were they not ſome Pages from one another; but ſurely all things are not right in our Author's Head who has two ſuch different thoughts at the ſame time, but perhaps 'tis but a mere ſtruggle between the fleſh and the ſpirit, if they ſhould be let in and get Preferments, they might keep him and others out; and if they would come in, the good of it is ſo viſible upon many accounts, that a man's reaſon cannot but deſire it and promote it; ſo that there is a natural tenderneſs and moderation on one ſide of his head (which I ſuppoſe is the ſofteſt) towards Diſſenters, but on the other ſide there is a moſt ſtiff hatred and averſion to them; but which of theſe ſhall take place when there is occaſion, muſt depend very much upon the Influence of the Moon and the Aſpect of the Planets.

I confeſs I am not for letting in Enemies into the Church, but ſurely by coming in they become Friends and ceaſe to be Enemies, for then they owne the Churches Communion and ſubmit to its Authority, and inſtead of ſtanding out they come in and joyn with it: now if any will do this I know no Church is ſo well fortified as to keep them out, nor is there any way to diſtinguiſh ſuch ſecret enemies from its ſecret friends; but 'tis a Secret ſome men have to find out diſtinc-

diſtinctions and make differences between thoſe of the ſame Communion, which is very pernicious and miſchievous; whoever comes up to the Churches terms of Communion and to full Conformity with it, are by no means to be counted ſecret enemies, when if this does not ſhew them to be open friends, every man may as well be ſuſpected to be a ſecret enemy.

But if theſe Diſſenters when they are taken into the boſom of the Church ſhould, like treacherous Vipers, endeavour to ſting their Mother, or gnaw through her Bowels, and attempt all they can to doe miſchief to her, how ſhall they be able to effect this, and what way ſhall they accompliſh it? Will they ſet up Conventicles in their own Pariſhes and draw away people from the Communion of the Church of which themſelves are Miniſters? or will they preach or write againſt thoſe Ceremonies or other things to which they have publickly conformed? it would be ſtrange if they ſhould doe this, but perhaps they may doe it another way; They may be choſen Convocation-men, and ſo have opportunity to oppoſe and confront the Biſhops; and though they ſhould pretend great reverence for the Epiſcopal Order and Authority, yet may ſlight and contemn it as much as open Fanaticks when it does not ſuit with their humour, and like bug *Diotrephes*, love *to have the preheminence* above it. Now if I find they doe this and make a dangerous diviſion in the Church by this means, I ſhall think 'em a ſort of Rebellious Presbyters that deſerve to be turned out of the Church not as ſecret but open enemies to the Biſhops, and that they have forgot a paſſage or two in *Ignatius*'s Epiſtles, and therefore I ſhall be very much tempted to be of our Author's mind to have thoſe read hereafter in our Churches for the ediſication and reproof of ſuch aſſuming Presbyters. p. 26.

I know

I know but one Objection more that can be picked up out of your Author's fardle of *important reaſons* againſt any Alterations, for they lye there like ſmall wares in a Pedler's pack, neither ſorted nor parcelled, but confuſedly jumbled together; as I ſuppoſe, they lye in his head: but the onely remaining Objection that I can find, and I am ſure I have done him juſtice and given full ſtrength to any thing that looked like a reaſon, is this, p. 6. *That by making Alterations, the Church will run the hazard of offending a greater number of more conſiderable perſons than they are like to gratifie thereby.* And he gives it in as objected formerly againſt the Bill for Comprehenſion, p. 11. *That as ſome might come in, ſo others that were in our Communion might take offence by the Alterations, and deteſt it, and ſeeing our frequent changes in ſome things, they might ſuppoſe that there is nothing certain among us; and, from the many diſputes about our Liturgy, proceed to queſtion our Articles; and at laſt fall off to the Church of* Rome, *which they ſaw more conſtant to their Principles.*

Now they muſt have a very mean opinion of the Churches Prudence, and give very little deference to her Authority, that ſhall be offended at her making ſuch Alterations in things that ſhe always declared *are in their own nature indifferent and alterable*, and which ſhe has reſerved to her ſelf a power to alter *according to the exigency of times and occaſions*, and upon ſuch prudential reaſons as ſhe ſhall think fit, of which ſhe is alone the moſt proper Judge: for, as our Authour ſays, *The People ought not to preſcribe to the Church in ſuch things, but the Church to them.*

They muſt therefore be no very dutifull and obedient Sons of the Church who ſhall not be ſatisfied with

with ſuch Alterations as ſhe ſhall think fit to make for the ends of peace and concord, and the allaying thoſe heats and diviſions that are among us.

They muſt have a very wrong and ſuperſtitious opinion of the outward Rites and Ceremonies and Circumſtantials of Religion, who lay ſo much weight and ſtreſs upon them as to think that there is any great matter in them beſides their ſubſerviency to outward order and decency, or that they are ſo neceſſary to thoſe that the Divine Worſhip may not be performed as acceptably and reverently without ſome of them as with them.

It is to be feared that ſuch weak perſons have not been ſufficiently inſtructed in the nature of things Indifferent when they are ſo zealous for thoſe above the weightier matters of Peace and Charity, to which they ought always to give way.

If ſome zealous or deſigning men have drawn ignorant and well meaning perſons into a greater opinion and admiration of themſelves by ceremonious formalities and overdoings, by unpreſcribed bowings and cringes, by proſtrations at the Euchariſt and the like inventions of their own, they have uſed the ſame ways that other Fanaticks have done to fill up their Congregations with gathering out of other Churches, by ſhews of greater piety and devotion, and have hereby broken the ſettled orders of the Church, and opened a gap for all the follies of an indiſcreet zeal and forward ſuperſtition, whereby ſome pious but not wiſe men have in all ages brought innumerable fopperies and ſingularities into the Church, to the great miſchief of Religion.

But ſurely a Church that thinks it not neceſſary to bring men to a Religion by any ſuch ſuperſtitious de-

vices, but by more true and rational methods of a ſober and diſcreet Piety, and needs not to make uſe of any ſuch tricks and pious frauds to impoſe upon the folly and weakneſs of its Votaries, nor has any paltry and by ends to be ſerved by ſuch Religious Cheats ſhould put a timely ſtop to all ſuch ceremonial exceſſes, and honeſtly teach all its Members that Religion lies not in any ſuch ſhews or forms of Godlineſs, but in ſober and manly devotion and in a vertuous and good life.

Now when men have ſuch a true notion of Religion, which the Church ought always to give them, and to correct all miſtakes to the contrary, there will be no great danger that they ſhould be much offended at the loſs or alteration of a few Rites or Ceremonies which are no more of the Eſſence of Religion than our Cloaths are of the Eſſence of a Man, who ſo long as he is decently habited according to the cuſtom of the Countrey, he may leave it to the Governours thereof to change the mode as they think fit.

But above all folks commend me to thoſe in our Communion, *who*, our Author tells us, *may take ſuch offence*
p. 11. *at our Alterations as to deſert us and fall off to the Church of* Rome. Theſe do well underſtand and have been well inſtructed in the Religion of the Church of *England*, who can make no difference between baptizing with the Croſs, as a ſignal of Chriſtianity, and adoring it as an object of worſhip, between kneeling at the Sacrament and worſhipping the Hoſt; but however this is a terrible danger, if by bringing ſome off from Fanaticiſm, we ſhall be likely to make others Papiſts, which is ten times worſe; let us therefore ſee what reaſon our Author may have to fear this: *Why ſeeing our frequent changes in ſome things they may ſuppoſe that there*

there is nothing certain among us, and from the many diſputes about our Liturgy proceed to queſtion our Articles, and at laſt fall off to the Church of Rome *which they ſaw more conſtant to their Principles.* If they are for ſuch a conſtant Church as ſhall never make any Alterations, then indeed they muſt be for an Infallible one, and none bids at that but the Church of *Rome*, but yet ſtill ſhe has made very often great changes and alterations in her Liturgies, and Ceremonies, and often corrected and reformed her Breviaries and Miſſals; ſo that if this ſhall ſhake and ſtartle a man, and by ſeeing ſo many alterations about thoſe things in their Church, he ſhall ſuppoſe there is nothing more certain in that than in ours, I hope he will quickly come back again like a fool as he went. He muſt be a Member of no Church i'th' world, nor ever could have been ſince the beginning of Chriſtianity, who will deſert and leave it for this reaſon becauſe it has made frequent Alterations in its Liturgy and Ceremonies; and if a man will be ſo fickle and ſceptical as *by ſeeing frequent changes in ſuch things to ſuppoſe there is nothing certain among us, and from ſome diſputes about Liturgies, queſtion the Articles of a Church, and at laſt fall to what is more conſtant in its Principles*, he muſt e'en fall off from all Churches and from all Religion, and for the ſame reaſon from all living under Laws and Government, for there are diſputes and alterations about thoſe, and from eating and drinking too, for all men are not agreed in the ſame meat and drink or way of dreſſing it, nor have always thought fit to ſtick to one way of Brewing or Cookery.

Thus I have fairly examined our Author's Arguments againſt making Alterations, and where there was any ſeeming weight in them, I have fully conſidered it; where they were weak and ridiculous, I have

made bold to expoſe them, for the Book was put out, and fell into my hands in a time of merryment, and I was very curious to ſee what ſome folks could ſay for themſelves. I aſſure him, had he or his Neighbours in the Countrey ſhewed any good reaſons why they are ſo ſtiff againſt Alterations, that could have convinced me that they were prejudicial to Religion or diſſerviceable to the Church, I would have ſent him my thanks for, inſtead of an Anſwer to them, or would have done my beſt to have written a Panegyrick upon that Noble Motto, *Nolumus mutare Leges* Angliæ, *That* after all is the onely mighty and irreſiſtable Argument that remains to be anſwered in this matter; but I wont undertake it, ſince it has been done to my hands by all the Parliaments and all the Convocations in *England* ever ſince the Barons wars, unleſs by the preſent Convocation which has done nothing, whoſe mind we do not yet know, and till we doe, it may paſs for an infallible Council; for ſurely *Vox Cleri* is not the mouth of it; nor is our Author to be taken as the Churches Repreſentative or Procurator General, or to be allowed ſo many Proxies as ſhall make up a Houſe. But though he calls his Book *Vox Cleri*, yet *Tuba Stentorophonica*, Balaam's *Aſs propheſying*, or the like Title might have been as ſignificant and ſuited it as well.

Having ſeen what he has to ſay on one ſide, I am now to conſider what has been or may be offered on the other, and what he has to ſay againſt them. The Reaſons for ſome Abatements and Alterations at this time are ſo plain and conſiderable, *ſo great and important*, as ſhows the manifeſt expediency, if not neceſſity, of doing it, and our Author has ſo little to ſay againſt it, though he was bound to ſay what he could,

that

that he has thereby done more to give up the cauſe and ſatisfie every impartial man about it, than if he had induſtriouſly pleaded for it; though I will not ſay as he does of one of the Letters, that *a man would think this Writer to have been hired to betray the cauſe--- by his weak and impertinent arguments for its Defence*; for I believe our Author does honeſtly what he can, and I don't ſuſpect any treachery at all in his writing, unleſs it be between his Will and his Underſtanding, and I doubt the one does a little trick and impoſe upon the other; for were it not for his implacable averſion and ill-will to the Fanaticks and Latitudinarians; I am very confident that his Reaſon is for Alterations and Abatements, by the little he has to ſay to the contrary, and to the obvious and important reaſons for them; and becauſe he himſelf ſo often and ſo expreſly declares for them in his good moods and lucid intervals.

The firſt objection which he makes to himſelf, and which roſe up in his own thoughts, for 'tis not in anſwer to any of the Letters, is this; *Herein we may pleaſe the King, the Parliament, and a great part of the diſſenting Laity*, which if it be true is very conſiderable. Now as to the latter, the diſſenting Laity, I don't know what to ſay to the great ones and the Politico's among them, who are for keeping up a Separate Party, as a Civil Faction in the State, whom they who are the Heads of it, and would make but an inconſiderable figure without it, can manage upon occaſion, and have it ready raiſed and formed for their deſigns; and I doubt they will not be ſo well pleaſed to have this and therefore themſelves leſſened by leſſening the ſtrength and number of the Separation, as I hope the beſt and moſt honeſt of the Diſſenting Laity will, who are more concerned for the ſincere good of Religion p. 5.

gion than carrying on Deſigns and Intrigues, who will no doubt follow and accompany their Leaders into the Church, as they went out with them.

But this I hope will be ſo far from being an objection to our Author or any Church of *England* man, againſt Alterations and a Comprehenſion, that it muſt be a very ſtrong Argument for it, ſince 'tis the Schiſm and Separation in the Church that keeps up thoſe Parties and Factions in the State, which help to diſturb the civil peace and quiet of the Kingdom, and has been the cauſe of the greateſt confuſions in it; ſo that whoever is a lover of the Church or Kingdom muſt be deſirous to have an end put to them, as far as is poſſible, that we may unite in one religious and civil Intereſt.

As *to the pleaſing the King and Parliament hereby*, that I think is not to be doubted, ſince the Parliament addreſſed to the King for calling a Convocation, and the King was pleaſed thereupon to call one for this very end and deſign, and to grant a Commiſſion, as has been uſual in the like caſe, to prepare things in order to it, ſo that 'tis to be feared, that ſome men who are no great friends to the preſent ſettlement and conſtitution, and who are upon ſome account angry and diſcontented, are at the bottom of all this heat and ſtiffneſs againſt Alterations, and who make uſe of others as Tools to work and hammer out their Deſigns by, or at leaſt to keep up a noiſe and diſturbance among us, as if great numbers were diſſatisfied becauſe they themſelves are ſo for private reaſons. Theſe men are mighty zealous againſt the Churches making any Alterations in the *Circumſtantials* of Religion till the Court makes ſome Alterations in the *Subſtantial* places of profit.

I know

I know we complain on all ſides of *being made and uſed* as Tools, as if this were the Fate of Churchmen, and Religion were only an Engine in their hands, charged with the terrors of another world to doe Execution only in this: Our Author *wiſhes he could leave his Countrey Miniſter* (who wrote one of the Letters) *well in his wits to conſider whether he be not uſed as a Tool to deſtroy the eſtabliſhed Church, by ſome who think themſelves mighty Politicians.* Nay he tells us, That the Authors of the two Letters *may be Papiſts, who by ſuch Arts ſeek to divide that they may deſtroy us.* Now this is the deepeſt Plot of the Papiſts, if it be one, that ever was laid to deſtroy and blow up the Church, and if thoſe who are for Alterations in order to unite Proteſtants and ſtrengthen the Church are Tools in the hands of Papiſts or other Politicians to deſtroy it, the Church is in a lamentable condition, and muſt neceſſarily be deſtroyed both by its friends and its enemies too, and by thoſe ways, which in all appearance, tend moſt to preſerve it, and the Deſign is laid ſo ſecretly, and to be wrought ſo ſtrangely, that 'tis impoſſible to prevent it. p. 42.

On the other ſide, 'tis plain and notorious matter of fact that ſome *Great* Diſcontented Lay-men, though not ſo *Great* as they would be, did manage ſeveral of our ſtiff men againſt Alterations: It was not ſo much behind the Curtain but the hands were ſeen if not the wires which moved the Puppets; beſides the diſſatisfied Biſhops and Clergy who have not taken the Oaths, nor will own the preſent Government, had more influence upon thoſe who have ſworn to the preſent King and Queen, and moſt ſolemnly recognized them in the name of the *Church of England*, than could be expected that men of ſuch different Apprehenſions, and acting by ſuch different meaſures ſhould at this time have had.

I am

I am very ſorry for their Suſpenſion, but 'tis ſtrange they ſhould hereby have more Authority over their Clergy than they had before in a matter of greater moment and greater difficulty, and 'tis equal wonder to me that ſome men who are ſo ſtiff in other things ſhould ſo ſoon forget their Promiſes, and others hardly remember their Oaths.

That the King and Parliament will be greatly diſpleaſed with the Clergy unleſs they conſent to ſome Alterations and Abatements in order to a legal Comprehenſion, is as much to be feared as 'tis certainly known that a Convocation was firſt deſired, and then ſummoned for this very purpoſe, as appears by the Addreſs of the Houſe of Commons, the King's Writ and Commiſſion, and his Letter to the Convocation, by which their minds are ſufficiently known and declared for the doing the thing in general, though they left the particular manner of doing it to the Clergy themſelves. Now the King and Parliament are to be allowed very proper Judges of the expediency and fitneſs or prudential neceſſity of this, and therefore of adviſing and directing it, as the Clergy are the fitteſt to execute and accompliſh it, ſince 'tis a matter of a Religious and Eccleſiaſtical nature that belongs properly to them. Now then for them to be called together for this very purpoſe by the Deſire of Parliament and the Command of the King, and to tell 'em when they come that they think it not prudent but dangerous to meddle and doe any thing, is, as if the Preſident and College of Phyſicians ſhould adviſe that in ſuch a caſe ſuch an operation ſhould be performed, and ſend for the Surgeons of the Hall to doe it, but they ſhould tell 'em there was no need of it and they would not meddle. Where though the latter are more fit to perform

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the Chyrurgical Operation, yet the other are as good and proper Judges that it is fit and expedient or neceſſary to be done.

But our Authour ſeems to deny that this will be pleaſing either to the King or Parliament, for four or five great and ſubſtantial Reaſons.

1. *As to the King, his Majeſty hath devolved that Province to the Convocation and Parliament*; as if the King were not pleaſed with any thing but what he does himſelf, and did not commit ſeveral things to be done by others which are very pleaſing to him. He hath devolved the Province of reducing *Ireland* to *Shomberg* and his Army, and yet no doubt but it will be very pleaſing to him; and he as much expects, and has given Commiſſion to doe the one as well as the other; and the happineſs of his Reign and the Peace of his Kingdom depend, though not equally, yet in great meaſure upon both; The King devolves the Province of raiſing Money to the Parliament, and yet what is left to them and their Prudence to doe is very neceſſary in it ſelf and very pleaſing to the King.

2. *He hath declared his ſatisfaction as to the preſent Conſtitution.* Several of the Clergy have declared theirs too, if I be not miſtaken, and ſomething farther than the King has done or can doe, unleſs he ſubſcribe and take Orders, and yet they would be mightily pleaſed with ſome Alterations for the good, as they think, of the Church and Religion, and the Peace of the Kingdom, not becauſe they are diſſatisfied with the preſent Conſtitution, though they ſuppoſe ſome little things in it may be Altered and Amended; as our Authour, I believe, is not diſſatisfied with his dear Body and Carcaſs, but yet is willing now and then to amend and repair it for the better.

3. *He doth confirm his declared judgment by his conſtant practice in communicating with the Church as eſtabliſhed, and frequent promiſes to favour and protect it.* The more reaſon hath the Church to oblige and gratifie him in what he deſires and propoſes, and thereby engage him to be its more firm and hearty friend, as well as requite him for what he hath already done for it.

4. *As to the Parliament, they do generally live in the Communion of the Church.* Is living in the Communion of the Church then a certain Argument of being againſt Alterations? Surely our Authour lives in a very groſs Air, and his Head wants a little clearing, or he would not talk at this rate.

5. *Nothing can be obligatory but what ſhall be enacted by them whoſe conſent we are not aſſured of*, i. e. by King and Parliament. Was any thing ever obligatory as a Law of the Kingdom but what was ſo enacted? Would he have the Convocation ſtay till it was ſo obligatory, and ſo enacted by the Civil Power, before they doe any thing? or can we ever be more aſſured of their Conſent to enact any thing than This?

I paſs now to another Reaſon for making theſe Alterations and Abatements in order to a Comprehenſion; and that being one of our own making, it muſt be a great reproach to us to be againſt it at *this time*, when we promiſed and declared for it in *another*; I mean in the Biſhops Petition to King *James*, which was in the name of the whole Church and Clergy, who made it their own by conſenting to it and approving it, *viz. That they wanted not due tenderneſs to Diſſenters, but were willing to come to ſuch a Temper as ſhould be thought fit when the matter ſhould be conſidered in Parliament and Convocation.* What was the meaning of that? Was it to ſtand our ground and doe nothing at all,

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but be very ſtiff againſt all Alterations for the ſake of Diſſenters? No ſure; that was not the Tenderneſs nor the Temper they were willing to come to, but they muſt mean by it the very ſame thing that I am pleading for, and this our Authour owns they did when *he heartily wiſhes* thoſe Biſhops *were in a condition* to perform their promiſe, *even for the Diſſenters ſake* (a), and he denys not what his Adverſary had ſaid, that, *he doubted not but they would agree to the Alterations that are deſired*; and he acquieſces in the Judgment of another whom he writes againſt, *That if nothing unreaſonable were deſigned, it might then have paſſed, and a firm eſtabliſhment enſued; for doubtleſs the calm tempers of thoſe Reverend Fathers would mightily have influenced their Sons* (b), ſome of the hotteſt of which mightily wanted ſuch a calm Influence.

(a) p. 41.

(b) p. 17.

But now what becomes then of all their and our Author's wiſe and important Reaſons againſt making Alterations, as if the Church were to be deſtroyed thereby, as if theſe Conceſſions were only loſing of ground, and gaining nothing thereby, ſince none would come in upon them, but would rather be encouraged to crave more and more till they had got all, and would never be ſatisfied neither. All theſe muſt be given up, ſince they are all overruled by this promiſe and opinion of the Biſhops for ſurely *They* are not *Tools*, whatever others are, *to deſtroy the eſtabliſhed Church, made uſe of by ſome who think themſelves mighty Politicians:* nor are *They* to be compared to an unskilfull Architect, *who hath undertaken to repair a good old Fabrick and make it better; but pulling down beam after beam, and after a leſſer ſtone a greater, till the whole Fabrick hath been like to fall; and then (what perhaps was deſigned at firſt) he perſwades the Owners that there is a neceſſity*

wholly to deſtroy the old, and erect a new one upon better
(a) p. 35. *Foundations* (*a*). Neither are *They* of another Trade, as ſcandalous almoſt as that of being unskilfull Architects, *viz.* of being *Eccleſiaſtical Tinkers, who undertaking*
(b) p. 45. *to mend one hole, do uſually make two or three* (*b*). Now all the wit and all the reaſon of theſe two Compariſons will fall upon the Biſhops as well as others ſince they were for the ſame thing, as our Author owns.

What then can he ſay to this promiſe of the Biſhops? why, *They are not in a condition to perform it*
* p. 53. *now, if they were never ſo willing* *. Is it not therefore fit to be done at all by thoſe who are in a condition, if they were willing? *Ay but put the Biſhops in* ſtatu quo *and then ſee what they will doe.* They may put themſelves into it when they pleaſe, but muſt not Promiſes be performed becauſe men are not in *ſtatu quo?* I take it to have been the Promiſe of the Church and Clergy in general at that time, and not only of thoſe particular Biſhops, and ſo the Diſſenters and all men took it, who were extremely pleaſed and ſatisfied with it, but to have another *Vox Cleri* now ſpeaking quite contrary to what it did before, will be ſuch a Reproach to us as if the Church had a *Double Tongue*; as if fear did inſpire us with more good nature, than the greateſt mercy and bleſſing; as if a common danger could do more to bring us to Tenderneſs and good Temper than a common Deliverance. Surely our preſent Safety and Happineſs ſhould not make us forget the Vows we made in our Diſtreſs and Adverſity, as if they were only like the Vows of frighted Marriners in a Storm, which are broken and recalled when the Tempeſt is blown over and there is a calm and clear Sky. Was there not a kind of Solemn Proteſtation, a Tacit Agreement, a General Reſolution at that time among all thinking

thinking and ſober men, that if they were once freed from the Danger they were then in by the Common Enemy, who was ſtrengthned and had like to have ruined us by our Diviſions, that they would do all that was poſſible to cure and remedy them for the future, and come to good Terms, and fair Correſpondence, and Chriſtian Union with one another? and will not thoſe kind Promiſes, and good Words, and fair Pretences we then made be looked upon as a meer trick, a ſhamefull colluſion, if we do not now make them good, when we have a fair opportunity and are called upon to doe ſo, and will give too juſt reaſon to others never to truſt us again, but for ever after to ſuſpect the Tenderneſs and the Temper, nay the Truth and the Juſtice as well as the Moderation of the Church of *England?* I ſay this with hearty and affectionate concern becauſe I think the Honour of it lies at ſtake, which I would bring ſome men, who ſeem to be concerned for it, ſeriouſly to conſider.

What were *the great and important Reaſons* which moved the Biſhops to this kind Promiſe, to come to a Temper with the Diſſenters, (and which perſwade others at this time to the ſame thing) by making ſome Alterations and Abatements in things which they ſcruple and we hold Indifferent, is ſo eaſie and obvious to diſcern, that he muſt be blinded with paſſion and zeal and bigottry who does not ſee them.

The bitter animoſities, the uncharitable heart-burnings, the rancorous paſſions, the uncharitable and unchriſtian temper which has been begot by our lamentable Schiſms and Diviſions, ſhould affect every Chriſtian heart with deep and ſenſible reſentments, and make us uſe all poſſible remedies that are likely to cure them.

The

The ſad evils and miſchiefs we have felt by keeping up a kind of Religious war ſo long in the Bowels of the Church and Kingdom, whereby we have treated one another as Enemies, and furiouſly contended on all ſides for matters of no great worth or moment (for in other things there were fair ſteps made towards an agreement in 1662.) ſhould diſpoſe us to make up a Peace upon reaſonable and fair terms, and rather give up a Ceremony or two be they never ſo ſignificant, than ſtill fight it out for ſuch poor trifles in compariſon to the greater things of Religion.

The Advantage that is given at all times to Atheiſm, Irreligion and Profaneneſs, as well as ſometimes to Popery by our Diviſions, ſhould make every lover of God and Religion, not willing to ſacrifice either Religion in general, or the Reformation in particular to an obſtinate zeal and humourſome ſtiffneſs for little things.

Our love to the beſt Church in the World, and which needs fewer Alterations than any other Church whatſoever, ſhould make us do all we can to enlarge, beautifie and ſtrengthen it, and not venture a deſparate puſh to let its Enemies wait for a juncture to ruine it, when we may ſo eaſily ſecure it by bringing in the Presbyterians into its Communion by a very few Conceſſions, that will ſatisfie them and be no manner of loſs or injury to our ſelves.

Laſtly, Our love to our Countrey, and to the preſent peace and ſettlement of it, which nothing can endanger but our fatal Diviſions, which tend to throw us back into the miſeries we have juſt eſcaped, and are therefore kept up and fomented by the wicked Policies of Diſcontented men, who infuſe jealouſies and variances into others heads from their own private feuds and

ſelf-

ſelf-intereſt, ſhould ſtrongly engage us to a fair union and accord with one another, and to the Deſign which I have been pleading for becauſe I think it will tend ſo much to promote it, and which few men, I hope, upon ſecond thoughts will be againſt. I ſhall leave it to their ſerious conſideration in the words of that learned and good man Dr. *Beveridge*, out of whoſe Sermon our Author would pick ſomething if he could to his purpoſe, but he conſiders not well what he writes himſelf, or what he tranſcribes out of him; theſe are the words as they are quoted by him, which are a good *Summing* up the matter at the laſt. *This only I dare affirm, that if it be neceſſary to reduce wandring Sheep into Chriſt's Flock, if to take off ſcruples from the minds of weak Brethren, if to allay hatred, appeaſe anger, and as much as may be to ſuppreſs all Diſſenſions concerning Religion, if to recall Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline to its primitive Vigour, if to Defend and Eſtabliſh the beſt Church in the world againſt the Aſſaults of Men and Devils; if theſe things ſeem neceſſary to any man, it will alſo ſeem neceſſary to that man to admit ſuch Changes as he is perſwaded will conduce to ſuch ends* (a). (a) p. 8.

I have now done with the Cauſe, and leave it to any man who reads his Book and this, whether any thing looſely and ſcatteringly offered in the one, has not had its full force fairly given it, and as full and complete an Anſwer returned to it by the other. But I have a word or two of Friendly Advice to our Author before I have done with him as a parting civility.

1. Firſt then, I would adviſe him not to ſpeak ſo loudly and openly againſt the Toleration, for fear the Parliament ſhould hear him, as he does upon all occaſions, telling us *the Reaſons againſt it are irrefragable*, that

that it uſed *to be granted at the inſtance and for the ſake of profeſſed Papiſts, that it is a greater favour than was granted the Church Party in the late Wars.* I hoped thoſe old Sores had been healed, or however that we ſhould not take example of our Enemies ill uſage and cruelty to revenge the ſame upon them. The Papiſts were never for a Toleration of Proteſtants only, as we have it now, with excluſion to themſelves, and they were as much for putting the Penal Laws in execution at one time, as they were for Toleration in another; ſo that they have been playing their game on both ſides, and both have been tricked by them. But with ſubmiſſion to the Irrefragable Reaſons of the Parliament in 1662. we have ſince ſufficiently tryed other methods, and found them not only ineffectual but miſchievous, ſo that ſome ſuch Expedient as a Toleration was abſolutely neceſſary, either to prevent on one ſide the ſcandalous unſucceſſull proſecution of weak and wilfull men, or on the other, the King's illegal diſpenſing with over ſevere Laws: I ſee the miſchief of a boundleſs and unlimited Toleration, but whether the miſchiefs of Perſecution, *i. e.* Extreme penalties for the ſake of Religion, be not greater, I leave to experience and the judgment of our Governours to determine. However it does not become Clergymen, who ſhould uſe the other methods of Tenderneſs and Perſwaſion more proper to the Goſpel and their Office, to grudge and repine at the favour of the State to thoſe who differ from them, and thereby diſcover their angry and revengefull Reſentments, and their good will to uſe other methods if it were in their power.

2. I would never have a man that writes againſt all Alterations, at the ſame time propoſe any, eſpecially ſuch ſtrange ones as *reading in our Churches the Epiſtles of* Ignatius *and* Polycarp, *or ſome* ſelect Chapters *out of King* Charles *the Martyr's* Εἰκὼν Βασιλικὴ, (a). For ſince he knows ſome People are greatly offended at the *Apocryphal* Leſſons, and would have nothing read in the Church but what is undoubtedly Canonical, it will look very odly to make ſuch a Propoſal to the Convocation at its next ſitting; and therefore I would deſire him not to move any ſuch thing, though perhaps the thing might take with ſome men if others were much againſt it, and out of mere ſpite to the deſign of Alterations they might clog the Bill with ſuch an Incumbrance. I do not intend to examine particular Alterations, but ſhall leave them to the wiſdom of the Church, *i. e.* the Convocation, and the wiſdom of the Nation, *i. e.* the Parliament, to agree and ſettle them as they ſhall think fit. I am for making ſome few Alterations, but am by no means for this of our Authour's propoſing, of reading *Ignatius* and *Polycarp*, and Εἰκὼν Βασιλικὴ, in our Churches, though I like them almoſt as well as *Tobit* and *his Dog*, or *Bell and the Dragon*: however ſome queſtion whether they are all genuine.

(a) p. 26.

3. Above all, I would adviſe our Authour when he writes again, never to make Compariſons between men, becauſe he knows, by the old Proverb, they are odious, and nothing can excuſe them, but when a neceſſary defence calls for them.

Thus though Dr. *Jane* be a very worthy perſon, and fills both the Profeſſor's and Prolocutor's Chair very well and gracefully, yet why he and his Neighbour Clergy ſhould be in ſuch mighty Joy and Tri-

umph becauſe he was choſen rather than Dr. *Tillotſon*, and look upon this as *a good Omen for the good of the Church* * as if the choice of the other would have foreboded ſome miſchief to the Church; this is ſo unmannerly rude and reflecting that it requires the temper of that excellent Man to forgive it, who has done as much good to Religion and the Church, as half a Convocation, Prolocutor and all.

* p. 1.

But I perceive the bottom of the pique, our Author has a moſt ill opinion of Sermons on *Week-days Lectures*, and the Dean has been a Preacher of ſuch, and has thereby provoked ſome, but taught more to Preach well and to Live well than any man perhaps ſince the Apoſtles; but why has our Authour and ſome others who are not much for Preaching on any day ſuch a ſpite againſt Sermons on the Week-days Lectures, why, he tells us, becauſe *in thoſe many great Abſurdities tending to Schiſm and Sedition are injected into the minds of the People* (b), and cannot they be as well injected on Sunday Lectures, if Men have a mind, as well as on Week-days Lectures? nay, I know no abſolute Preſervative but that they may be injected in Sermons on Sunday morning, as well as at any other times, if the Preachers be very much inclined to it.

(b) p. 26.

I will by no means diſpute with our Author, whether there be not in the Countrey *many Miniſters, who for their Learning may be without diſparagement compared with moſt of the City Miniſters* (c); that they may I'll aſſure him; and very much exceed them too, if he be a Countrey Miniſter himſelf, as I have two or three Reaſons beſides his Latine Sayings, which are far beyond the learning of moſt City Miniſters, to believe him to be. But why muſt he be comparing the Countrey and City Miniſters, like the Countrey

(c) p. 15.

Countrey and City Mouſe, as *to the great eaſe and plenty of living* * ? I perceive he has been ſearching not only into their *Veſtries, where they ſometimes tarry*, he ſays, *till Prayers be ended*; (he might have added, where they drink Sack too ſometimes after Sermon, which they don't in the Countrey) but into their very Kitchings, and ſo far as I know he might be for Reforming of thoſe, were he not againſt all Alterations and Amendments whatſoever. What brave Stories does he carry down, I warrant you, and tell his Neighbours in the Countrey of the City Miniſters plentifull eating and ſeldom preaching, *having ſuch frequent Supplies, beſides Lecturers and Readers**, whereas the whole burthen lies upon them in the Countrey of ſtudying carefully and accurately penning their Sermons, and then preaching them in great Churches, beſides writing againſt Popery, and defending at all times the Cauſe of the Church and Religion. Further, *It ought to be conſidered*, he ſays, *that a great part of the Countrey Miniſters have travelled ſome an hundred ſome near two hundred miles* (but not the Apoſtolical way of footing it I ſuppoſe) *to meet in Convocation for the benefit of the Clergy*, and I hope the great good they have done there is a ſufficient reward for all their pains; *and ſit ſometimes near the whole day in the depth of Winter*, but they were hot enough they ſay for all this; and I pray where do the City Clergy of the Convocation ſit then? in a Veſtry, or ſome other warm place. One would think a man doated either with age or ſome other feebleneſs who would thus trifle and expoſe himſelf by ſuch drivelling and ridiculous malice: This is ſo below *Don Quixot* and *Fur Prædeſtinatus*, to which he mighty wittily compares the Authors of the two Letters, *p.* 56. but with an unaccountable

* p. 37.

* Ibid.

impertinence and fillineſs, that I can think of nothing for a *New-years gift* for him but a Coat with long Sleeves and this Badge upon it, *Nolumus mutare Leges Angliæ.* So I take my leave of him and wiſh him and his Neighbours a merry New Year.

FINIS.

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